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descriptive. As they retire again and Faust and Marguerite for the third time advance, the deeper notes of the drama are for the first time hinted at. The music is no longer the same. Still simple and innocent in character it is more serious and earnest. Marguerite's first words are to ask Faust if he believes and trusts in religion. Faust's answer is one that reveals his own state of indecision on the subject, a brief statement of the sophistries which puzzle so many of the minds that try to settle this question by the unaided light of their blinded reason, and it is from this place that the motto for this act is taken; but he declares his belief in love, if not in God, and so finds the way to the first note of real passion heard in the scene—a passion so intense that it sweeps Marguerite with it for a few moments in its stormy course. Half alarmed at the intensity of her own feelings, as yet uncomprehended, she shrinks from the embrace in which she had allowed him to enfold her and is about to take her leave of him; but by a natural question as to her daily customs, he at once calms her agitation and retains her presence. He would at least see her again, she fears that her mother may become cognizant of his visit, and he gives her a sleeping potion (which he assures her is harmless) which will cause her mother to slumber too heavily to be easily awakened. The scene is concluded by a quartette of striking originality. Mefistofeles and Martha are singing always *with* the beat of the conductor, Faust and Marguerite always *between*, in syncopation. As the movement is somewhat rapid this is difficult for the singers; but the effect produced is very novel. A rapturous outburst from Marguerite, repeated by Faust, breaks this quartette in the middle; and, when it is resumed, it is with a change of figuration that will make it unrecognizable for by far the larger number of hearers. The measure being beaten in four quarters, Mefistofeles and Faust have always the first two—and Marguerite and Martha the last two—sixteenths of each quarter. The difficulty of this figuration is greatly increased by the accompanying stage action, as Marguerite and Martha are being chased by Faust and Mefistofeles all about the stage. Just at the end of the quartette they are caught, when all break into a burst of laughter followed by the exclamation, "Ah, I love you!" This ends the first scene.

The second is a violent contrast. The orchestra are breathing low, shuddering winds, which every now and then swell to a threatening roar, and the eye is employed with the dismal and horror-inspiring crags and precipices of the Witches' Mountain, beheld under the unnatural light of a red and lurid moon. It is the night of the Witches' Sabbath. No living being is visible; but from behind the crags comes the voice of Mefistofeles, urging and encouraging Faust in his toilsome climb up the mountain. Arrived in sight, they are surrounded by will-o'-the-wisps, which glimmer about them and cast a fitful light on their gloomy path. Suddenly, in the distance, are heard the voices of the approaching wizards and witches, and Mefistofeles, in a magnificent burst of demoniac joy, bids Faust observe how even the voices of nature join in and aid the hellish chorus. With frantic haste the accursed crew rush in from every side, singing a wild chorus, the harmonies and orchestration of which are wonderfully original and descriptive. Mefistofeles, pushing his way through the crowd, demands their recognition; and, in an instant, falling on their knees around him, the horrid beings pay him their homage in an awe-struck whisper. He bids them give him the world within his grasp. After a short incantation, they take from the caldron a glass globe which they hand to him. Then Mefistofeles sings the sneering "Ballad of the World," one of the great numbers of the score, and at its conclusion dashes down the globe which shatters into countless fragments. Instantly the host of sorcerers join hands and dance upon and around these fragments singing, to the wildest music, the chorus:

"Around, dance around! for the world is destroyed!
Around, dance around! for the world is accursed!
And over the ruin to which it is hurled,
The gallop of Satan in circles is whirled!"

It seems, when this chorus is heard, as though in it had been reached the wildest climax of hellish joy and confusion; and, in daring to put such a chorus in such a place, Boito proved his faith in his own powers; for the real climax of the scene has yet to come, just before the fall of the curtain. Suddenly the chorus is stopped, and its participants halt in surprise and alarm; for, in the air, above them, appears the pallid

vision of Marguerite, her throat encircled by a slender line of blood, as though she had been beheaded. Faust sees her, and his remembrance and love of her again awaken. During this time the orchestra breathes softly the most passionate parts of the love music in the preceding garden scene; only interrupted by rude phrases from Mefistofeles, who is trying to distract Faust's attention from the vision. At the disappearance of Marguerite, the satanic revels are resumed, and now comes one of the most marvellous numbers in the opera.

CARYL FLORIO.

(To be concluded.)



LIKE Cæsar, Constantin Sternberg, the Russian pianist, has come and seen, but, unlike that restless Roman, he has not conquered. This is, however, much less his fault than the result of unpropitious circumstances. He made his American début in the Academy of Music, always a bad place for a pianist. The best piano does not sound well there; and the piano Sternberg had was not the best. As it was pitted, too, against the flowing and sustained effects of an orchestra of nearly seventy, the case was made all the worse. The selection and arrangement of the programme were also bad; in short, it seemed as though there had been a conspiracy against the unfortunate newcomer. Making all due allowances for these very disadvantageous circumstances under which Mr. Sternberg appeared, the truth about him seems to be this: He is an artistic player, his conceptions are musical, his attack of the instrument good, and his execution generally excellent. He is not as great as one or two giants on the piano whom we have had; but he is far better than most of those to whom we have occasionally to listen, and has a right to claim a high place among pianists, although not the highest. The newspapers and his misguided managers have, I fear, killed his career in New York; but in Boston he may recover his lost ground, provided the same or similar mistakes be not made with him in that city.

PARTICULARLY noticeable at Mr. Sternberg's concert was the inconsiderate and selfish behavior of the members of the orchestra, who made him and the audience wait while they packed up their instruments and took themselves off, though there was but one piece remaining on the programme. There is altogether too much of this on the part of these honorable gentlemen. If their harmonious independencies do not happen to take a fancy to any particular artist, they will do any unpleasant act of this sort which may suggest itself, quite regardless of the fact that they are engaged and paid to assist in completing the enjoyment of a concert, not in spoiling it. To have waited for this last piece would have kept them from their beloved beer not more than ten or fifteen minutes more, at the most liberal calculation, and would have prevented a very ugly break in the concert which might have seriously chilled, or even have driven away a large portion of the audience. But a gentlemanly consideration for the feelings of others, at ever so slight a sacrifice on their own parts, is a millennial motive of action of which these wind and string autocrats seem to have not the least idea.

I HEAR that the Abbott Opera Company has lost the services of Mrs. Seguin. This deprives that artistically shaky organization of one of the few real artists in it.

MISS NININGER, a young lady who is credibly reported to have had considerable success in Italy as a singer, lately gave a concert at Chickering Hall. I have frequently thought that, in spite of all we hear of the severity of audiences on the other side of the water,

they must be easier to please than a good American public, at any rate with singers. This young lady is a case in point. She sings very well, but will never create an excitement here. Her voice is fair—best in the extremes, her execution passably good, her conception inartistic, and she has a bad habit of occasionally grimacing when she sings. At the same concert appeared a newly-arrived Norwegian tenor, Mr. Knudson Nilsson, a new violinist, Mr. Hasselbrink, and a flutist, Mr. Unger. Mr. Carlberg's orchestra assisted and greatly aided in completing the pleasures of the evening.

THEODORE THOMAS has been called in to stay the financial ruin of the Metropolitan Concert Hall. From the moment that the weather became too cool for the patrons to sit outside, where they need not be "bothered" with the music, the audiences dropped off in numbers most alarmingly. The advent of Thomas has caused an immediate influx of business which I sincerely hope may last; but I fear that the noisy wooden floor and poor acoustic properties of the place may interfere with this desired consummation.

NEW YORK owes Thomas a generous support. I have sometimes, on presenting this statement, been met with the reply that this was nonsense; that Thomas, like every other conductor, has been paid for the work he has done. This is a good argument as applied to a bricklayer or carpenter, but hardly appropriate to this case. That Thomas was even properly supported for the mere concerts that he gave was not true, until the last three years or so; and the people who answer me in this way do not take into consideration the fact that, at a serious personal pecuniary loss, Thomas has been for years patiently, judiciously, and skilfully educating the New York public, until it has reached a pitch of receptivity which renders it possible to present before them programmes which could hardly be offered safely in any European city. This is a boon for which money could hardly pay; but if it could, it is certain that Thomas has not reaped here that position of assured income which could alone approach an adequate return.

MR. RUMMEL, the pianist, is going to give some astounding concerts in a very short time. Three concertos at one concert, and other solos besides! But Mr. Rummel is one of the few pianists who can do this. His endurance will carry him safely through; and his fire and personal magnetism will keep his audiences interested and their attention enchained. His piano recitals of last spring are still held in pleasant remembrance by all who attended them. C. F.

MR. MAPLESON's third season of Italian opera opened at the Academy of Music with "Lucia di Lammermoor." The singers were Mme. Gerster, Signor Ravelli, Signor Galassi and Signor Monti, with Signor Arditì at the conductor's desk. "Lucia" is a well-worn work, but it is brimful of melody, and latter-day composers have been so chary of this very important element in music—at least as the element is taken in a popular sense—that the pure and flowing strains of Rossini, Donizetti and Bellini are, to a very large proportion of the public at all events, more than welcome. The performance of "Lucia" was smooth and, at points, effective. In the early scenes of the opera Mme. Gerster's performance was somewhat of a disappointment. Her voice appeared to have lost much of its "timbre;" she sang with considerable effort, and once or twice her intonation was decidedly inaccurate. Later on she retrieved herself, and her mad scene was an exquisite bit of singing, in respect alike of tone and style. The new tenor, Signor Ravelli, possesses a strong and sweet voice; his emission is natural and easy, and his elocution excellent. As an actor he is at least passable. His "Edgardo" met with general acceptance, and the impression produced was that a young artist of real merit and rather uncommon promise had been added to Mr. Mapleson's forces. Signor Galassi was vocally and dramatically as efficient as ever, and the chorus and the orchestra—spite of Signor Arditì's marked inclination to drag the tempi—were in first-rate "form."

F. A. S.